

AMIAA News

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The Armenian Evangelical Baptist Congregation of Yerevan at worship.

“... AND THE RUINED CITIES WILL BE REBUILT”

by Movses B. Janbazian



Rev. Movses B. Janbazian

Spitak, the Armenian city that was completely destroyed by the cataclysmic earthquake of last December, is located in a valley between the Bazum and Pam-bak mountain ranges in Armenia. Looking at the remains of that ill-fated city, we could not contain our emotions; and we cried . . . and cried aloud. Manoug, the guide from St. Etchmiadzin who accompanied our team of AMAA/Armenian Evangelical representatives to the disaster area, commented that seventy percent of the population of Spitak was killed and that many bodies still lay under the rubble before us. Someone from our group murmured something about the prophet Ezekiel and his vision of the valley of dry bones. “This must have been what Ezekiel saw —,” he remarked, with a voice emotionally charged with grief and anger. And, indeed, Spitak and scores of other towns and villages we had seen that day fit the description of that valley full of dry bones as recorded in the thirty-seventh Chapter of the Book of Ezekiel in the Bible. Death . . . destruction . . . desolation. . .

Late that night, in the quiet of my room at the St. Etchmiadzin Monastery, I opened my Bible to Ezekiel’s Book and read about the valley of dry bones. But, then, in the same passage I also read about the command and promise that Ezekiel had received from God— **“Prophecy over these bones, and say to them, ‘O**

dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.’ Thus says the Lord God to these bones, ‘Behold, I will cause breath to enter you that you may come to life’ ” Ezekiel 37:4-6. **“And the ruined cities will be rebuilt and filled with people and the mountains of Israel will be filled again with homes.”** Ezekiel 36:10-11.

In the face of his people’s unimaginable loss and suffering that had prompted his vision, Ezekiel must have wondered if God’s words made any sense. “Prophecy. . . ?” If God wanted to rebuild the ruined cities of His people and raise the stricken people of Israel, shouldn’t he have chosen some other more powerful means? How on earth could a poor prophet help in bringing about what God wanted to do for His people?

Yet God’s response to Ezekiel’s apprehensions and doubts was a reassuring command: “Prophecy . . . !” That is, you do your job and leave the rest to God. You do what you are able to do; you bring your contribution of prophecy, labor and persistence, and God will take care of the rest. No matter how absurd your effort may seem; no matter how insignificant your contribution may appear compared to the awesomeness of the task of rebuilding the shattered homes and lives of your people, if you do your part, then God will do His share; He will heal the wounds of your battered people; He will rebuild the destroyed cities of your nation; and the mountains and plains of your land will be filled again with homes, people and children.

As we struggle to cope with the earthquake disaster in Armenia, God has the same message to each and every Armenian in the Diaspora or in Armenia. God is calling each one of us to bring our own particular share in the rebuilding of our Motherland. And no matter how insignificant our contribution may seem, God will honor His promise and will reward our obedience to His command. He will allow us to see the recuperation of our people from this disaster. He will heal, strengthen and bless our people, so that the Nation He claimed as His own in 301 A.D. will

continue to become a living testimony to His glorious power and saving grace among all the nations of the earth.

“The ruined cities will be rebuilt and filled with people . . . Your flocks and herds will also greatly multiply . . . mountains will be filled again with homes . . . I will do even more for you than I did before . . . and everyone will know I am the Lord.” Thus God spoke to Ezekiel and thus He is speaking to us today. Let all who believe in Him say, “Amen!” and with faith and determination let each one contribute his or her particular share to the rebuilding of Armenia.

The Inspirational Corner

LIVE THE WAY YOU PRAY

*I knelt to pray when day was done,
And prayed: “Oh, Lord, bless everyone:
Lift from each saddened heart the pain
And let the sick be well again.”
And then I awoke another day
And carelessly went on my way.*

*The whole day long I did not try
To wipe a tear from any eye;
I did not try to share the load
Of any brother on the road;
I did not even go to see
The sick man just next door to me.*

*Yet once again when day was done,
I prayed: “O, Lord, bless everyone.”
But as I prayed, into my ear
There came a voice that whispered clear,
“Pause, hypocrite, before you pray,
Whom have you tried to bless today?”*

*“God’s sweetest blessings always go
By hands that serve him here below.”
And then I hid my face and cried.
“Forgive me, God, for I have lied;
Let me but live another day,
And I will live the way I pray.”*

—Author unknown

THE ARMENIAN EVANGELICAL CHURCHES IN ARMENIA AND GEORGIA

There are two Armenian Evangelical churches in Soviet Armenia—one in Yerevan and the other in Leninakan—and two churches in the Georgian S.S.R.—one in Tbilisi and another in Sokhoun. The Armenian Evangelical delegates who visited Armenia in early April, in the course of their work, made a point of visiting the two Evangelical churches in Armenia and invited the pastor of the church in Tbilisi to a meeting in Yerevan.

The following excerpts are from the report of the AMAA Executive Director, The Rev. Movses B. Janbazian, submitted to the AMAA Board of Directors:

THE ARMENIAN EVANGELICAL BAPTIST CHURCH OF LENINAKAN

The church is located at 26 Paghramian Street in Noravan, one of the poorer neighborhoods of Leninakan. It is an old house converted into a small hall with 96 chairs. The gaping hole behind the pulpit, a result of the earthquake, has been closed with makeshift boards. The walls and ceiling have cracks and the building appears far from safe for gatherings. Nevertheless, the congregation of 70 members meets regularly for Bible study, prayer and worship. A Council of five elders provide leadership under the chairmanship of Sister Khanoum Khanouyan.

The pastor of the Leninakan church is Rev. Krikor Malakian, a devoted Christian gentleman in his mid-60’s. His daughter-in-law was seriously injured and was hospitalized. He, his son and his grandchildren are staying at the home of a Christian family in Yerevan. During his absence, Brother Kevork Topjian, one of the church elders, leads the services. We visited Rev. Malakian and his family in Yerevan. It was encouraging to see Rev. Malakian return to his pulpit in Leninakan on the Sunday following our meeting with him.

We also met with the members of the Leninakan church Council and discussed the needs of the congregation. Some families who had found refuge in Yerevan and other cities are returning. Only a few members of the congregation have lost



External view of the Armenian Evangelical Baptist Church building in Leninakan.

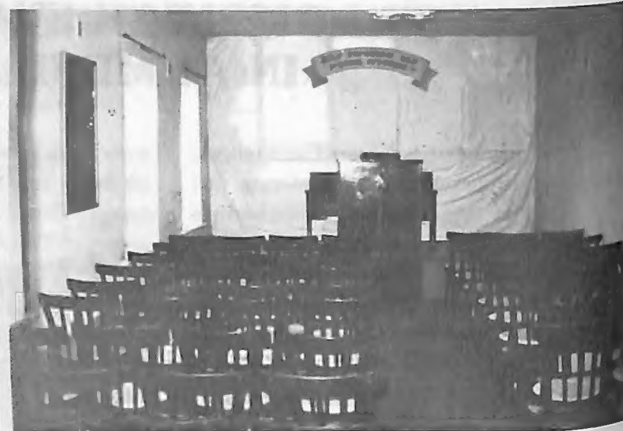
loved ones. The most striking need relates to housing. Unemployment is another problem. There are numerous needy families and elderly people. Since the congregation is registered with the government, the church building is “insured” and eventually will be restored or rebuilt by the authorities. According to the Chairman of the Council for Religious Affairs of Soviet Armenia, Mr. Stepan Hamayak Vardanian, the restoration or rebuilding plans will be clarified in 2-3 years. Residential buildings are being given priority, and there is a plan to build the new center of Leninakan on one of the seismologically safer suburbs of the city. European and American church groups (TEAR Fund of England, National Council of Churches of the U.S., the World Council of Churches) have shown interest in helping the church. In our discussions with church leaders and government officials, we unequivocally expressed our hope that the needs of the church will be met, and that we are ready to help in any way we can to have an adequate building with auxiliary facilities for the congregation.

The Leninakan church also serves as the “parent church” for the small Arme-



Rev. and Mrs. Krikor Malakian

nian Evangelical Baptist congregations of Kirovakan (about 40 members), Spitak (a few families) and Stepanavan (about 30 members). None of these groups has a church building. They meet in houses for prayer, Bible study and worship, led by Rev. Malakian or local Christian leaders. The Kirovakan group meets at the home of Sister Hasmig Amiraghian.



The Elders of the Armenian Evangelical Baptist Church of Leninakan (left); the interior of the church in Leninakan (right).

THE ARMENIAN EVANGELICAL BAPTIST CHURCH OF YEREVAN—

The church is located at 90 Nardos Street in Yerevan. It has 500 members. The pastor is The Rev. Yuri Avanesian, a devoted Christian gentleman in his early 40's. The church building is old and also too small for the congregation. A church Council, under the chairmanship of Brother Aram Arakelian, helps govern the life and witness of the congregation. Weekday meetings take place on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. There are two Sunday worship services, one in the morning and another in the evening. We attended and participated in the services on Thursday and Sunday. We shared brief messages, conveyed the greetings and love of our churches in North America and presented a communion chalice to the church as a token of our solidarity and fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Armenia. The services were moving and unforgettable experiences. On Sunday, attendance was over 350. The choir was impressive, the prayers fervent and the singing spirited. The warmth and fellowship of the congregation were beyond description.

We met twice with the Yerevan church Council to discuss a broad range of subjects relating to the life of the church and the needs of the congregation.

The members of the congregation have helped in the relief effort by opening their homes, providing food, distributing clothing and making monetary gifts to homeless families from the affected areas.

There are still many families who share their homes and resources with displaced relatives and friends. The church has



Sister Hasmig Amiraghian of Kirivakan with the Executive Director of the AMAA.

used funds from its own treasury to help needy individuals and families. The church building and its surroundings, especially the entrance from the street and the stairway leading to the small church court, need extensive and urgent restoration. The church building is in an accessible area in Yerevan. Therefore, the leadership does not want to move the building to another location. Previous requests to renovate and expand the church building have been regularly rejected by the authorities. In our discussion with the Minister of Religious Affairs, as well as with other government officials and church leaders, we emphasized the need for a more attractive and dignified place of worship for the congregation. All seem to agree about the need. We have to wait to see if the authorities will issue the required permit to renovate and ex-



Rev. Yuri Avanesian (right), Pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Baptist Church of Yerevan, with Rev. Daniel Sahagian, President of the Armenian Evangelical World Council.

pand the church after the more pressing needs created by the earthquake disaster have been met.

The church will shortly receive the gift of a van from the Council of the Union of Baptist Churches based in Moscow and a large shipment of clothing and health and school kits from the Church World Service of the National Council of Churches of Christ—U.S.A. Bibles and hymnals, delivered through legitimate and recognized channels, were cited as standing needs. We were glad to learn that the Bibles we shipped from Europe last year had been received and distributed. Upon our urging, the Lausanne Committee extended to Rev. Avanesian and invitation to the Lausanne



Armenian Evangelical Delegates with the leaders of the Armenian Evangelical Baptist Church of Yerevan (left) and the Hye Yekeghetzasiratz (Armenian Church Lovers' Brotherhood).

Evangelism Conference to be held next July in Manila, The Philippines. We encouraged him to respond positively, promising him our assistance and support. Christian literature such as publications, daily devotional booklets, calendars and tracts are needed. It was again emphasized that such materials should be delivered through legitimate channels.

THE ARMENIAN EVANGELICAL BAPTIST CHURCHES IN GEORGIAN S.S.R.—

Upon our request, the pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Baptist Church of Tbilisi (Georgian S.S.R.), Rev. Souren Harutunian, had come to Yerevan where we met with him on two occasions and had informative discussions. There are two Armenian Evangelical Baptist Churches in Georgia: one in the capital city of Tbilisi and another in Sokhoum. The church in Tbilisi was organized in the 1850s. A Christian publication, *Pari Lour* (Good News) edited by Badvagan Tarayan of Baku, has played a key role in the spiritual enlightenment of its founders. Swiss missionaries have also helped the church in its formative years. In 1926 Hovsep Zakarian was ordained as the first pastor of the church. He served three years and was followed by The Rev. A. Asirian, who provided pastoral ministry until 1939, when the church was shut down by Stalin and its pastor and leaders exiled to Siberia. For five years the church continued its existence as an underground congregation with Assadour Harutunian as its leader. In 1944, the church was reopened and in 1952 Rev.



Rev. Mouses B. Janbazian presenting on behalf of the AMAA, Chalice of Communion to the Rev. Yuri Avanesian, pastor of the church in Yerevan.

Harutunian was ordained as its pastor. He served until 1980 when his son, Rev. Souren Harutunian, assumed the pastor's position. The current membership is 150. Two weekday meetings and one Sunday worship service are held in the sanctuary of the Georgian Evangelical Baptist Church.

The Armenian Evangelical Baptist Church of Sokhoum has about 20 members who meet for worship at a local Baptist church. Rev. Mihran Torosian is the pastor of the church which maintains close fellowship with the one in Tbilisi.

The primary needs of the churches in Georgian S.S.R. are Bibles and Christian literature, closer fellowship with other Armenian Evangelical congregations, hymnals, and their own church buildings.

The Armenian Evangelical Baptist Churches of Armenia and Georgia deserve our wholehearted encourage-



The Rev. Souren Harutunian, Pastor of the Evangelical Baptist Church of Tbilisi, Georgia. They have served as beacons of Armenian Evangelical Christian witness with patience, courage and endurance. Their many years of history of loyal service to Christ and His Kingdom is remarkable and even humbling.

LEBANON: "A GLIMPSE OF HELL"

The following excerpts from a recent letter from Mrs. Nancy Sagherian describes the hellish conditions in which people live in Lebanon these days. "We have become a place of don't have. We don't have security. We don't have school. We don't have electricity. We don't have much water," writes Nancy, and concludes her letter stating that the needs of the war-weary population of Lebanon have never been as critical as they are at present."

Nancy is the wife of Mr. John Sagherian, the Regional Director of Youth for Christ (YFC) mission outreach in Lebanon. In conjunction with their YFC ministry, John and Nancy serve as capable and inspiring youth workers in our churches, schools, summer camps and Christian Endeavor Youth groups in Lebanon. John also renders other important services to the local Armenian Evangelical community through his active participation in the leadership of a number of local Armenian Evangelical institutions, including Haigazian College, where he is one of the four AMAA representative members of the Board of Managers of the College.

John, Nancy and other Christian workers, pastors, teachers, social workers and community leaders in Lebanon are true heroes who, at the cost of great sacrifices, continue their gallant ministry to our suffering people in that war-ravaged country.

We live in a country at war. We had almost forgotten this because it has been so quiet the past two years. Like magicians, we had conjured up the Illusion of Peace. But that's all it was—an illusion.

The truth is we have been and are going through some of the most difficult, frightening days we have seen in Lebanon.

When the Syrians started shelling in mid-March, we had no idea it would grow into what we have now. There was no safe place, and we were amused to learn that some friends in Ashrefieh were moving up to our village for safety when the day before some friends had left our village to move down to Ashrefieh for safety. The New York Times reported that up to 100,000 shells landed in East Beirut and the surrounding mountains in eight weeks. And we easily remember the sleepless night 20,000 rockets rained down.

We slept on the floor at our neighbor's for nearly eight weeks. When things grew worse, we stuffed Thia and Jay each night into a guest bathroom hoping that because it is in the center of the apartment, it might be safer.

We slept with one ear open and because some of the worst fighting was during the night, we were physically worn out. We started experiencing some of the same side effects of war that everyone else was going through—irritability, apathy, inability to concentrate, head-



John and Nancy Sagherian with their children, Thia and Jay.

ache, nausea. One morning we woke up feeling as tired as when we had finally been able to sleep. Before we could even get upstairs to change our clothes, the guns started up again. I looked at John and said, "Surely this is a glimpse of hell!" It must be a place where you feel constant fear and your stomach is in a permanent knot, where you have no security and there is no hope for the future, where you feel helpless and unable to trust anyone. Surely this is a glimpse of hell.

THE ARMENIAN COMMUNITY IN SYDNEY

The city of Sydney lies at the beautiful south-eastern shore of Australia, and what makes its beauty remarkable is that it is rich with forests, green hills and winding rivers. God has certainly bestowed on Sydney the blessings of natural beauty. Here, the leaves seem to be greener, the sky bluer and the sun and moon brighter.

An Armenian visitor, no matter where he or she may come from, need not feel like a stranger in Sydney, because almost 18,000 Armenians from Lebanon, Iran,

Egypt, Syria, Turkey, Iraq, Palestine, Greece, the Balkans, Africa, etc., have settled in the city and in its seventy precincts.

After all, why should an Armenian feel out of place when he or she can find the Armenian Evangelical, Armenian Apostolic, and Armenian Catholic churches with their leaderships and headquarters, two Armenian daily schools and six others which function on a one-day-a-week basis, where one can find the Armenian General Benevolent Union,

the Armenian Red Cross, the Homenetmen, Armenian periodicals, monthly church bulletins, hour-long Armenian radio broadcasts four times a week?

Not only Armenians but people from many other lands feel at home in Sydney. They all benefit from the freedom of religion, which permits them to establish their churches, temples, mosques, etc., and organize cultural activities, publications and broadcasting services.

The term "multicultural society" may describe well the ethos behind the general

policy of the government, which promotes the growth of various communities, but at the same time puts the organization, contributions and advances of these communities in the service of a new Australia.

The picture was very different for those Armenians who arrived in Sydney in the early nineteen-sixties; at that time they faced all sorts of difficulties. Those Armenians suffered under the pressures of a foreign country, an English-speaking European people, a strange social and family lifestyle and unknown rules of the marketplace. Moreover, after being used to relying on the earnings of one person in the family, many Armenian craftsmen and laborers suffered disappointments,

but they persevered. They built new nests, started new churches, organized their communities and raised a gentle and constructive generation of Armenians.

Statistics show that up until 1960, the entire Armenian population in Australia was barely one thousand (that is, about 200 families). In 1966, there were already six thousand Armenians (about 1,200 families) who lived in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane, and Perth. Currently, apart from those living in Sydney, six thousand Armenians live in Melbourne, a thousand in Perth, and another thousand in various other parts of Australia.

(Rev.) Hovhannes N. Karjian

The Rev. Hovhannes N. Karjian.



IRANIAN-ARMENIANS STRANDED IN PAKISTAN

Last year the AMAA joined with seven other Armenian-American organizations to create the Armenian Refugee Coordinating Committee (ARCC), which has been pursuing the resettlement of Iranian-Armenian refugees through our government's special "S.P. 6,000" semi-funded refugee program. This special program allows interested communities to create new and/or additional refugee admissions into the United States during fiscal 1989. Thanks to the efforts of the ARCC, there has been created an opportunity to make at least 100 semi-funded refugee visas available for the Armenian refugees in Pakistan. These are mainly young Armenian men, some with their families, who had escaped the draft in Iran during the Iran-Iraqi war. They cannot go back to Iran, because they are branded as deserters and traitors. They cannot proceed to other countries either, because they are not recognized as "refugees." They are, therefore, stranded in Pakistan, living in miserable conditions. Through the above-mentioned program, there is now a window of opportunity to save some of these young men and their families by bringing them to the United States. The migration and refugee services of the United States Catholic Conference, the largest volunteer resettlement organization in the United States, has agreed to resettle those Iranian-Armenian

refugees from Pakistan whom ARCC may sponsor. The ARCC's sponsorship contribution for these refugees will be simply a financial one with the cost per refugee about \$1,000 to cover their travel, processing, reception and placement upon arrival in the United States. Like "fully-funded" refugees, upon their arrival in the United States, they will be eligible for the full range of federally-funded social service programs. The AMAA, one of the seven constituent organizations of ARCC, will undertake its share of this program by providing for the sponsorship of 13 refugees at \$1,000 each.

If sufficient funding is not committed for the sponsorship of these refugees, the Administration will not make the "special refugee" visas available for Armenians, but will allocate them to six other ethnic

and interested groups that have already made commitments to the State Department. It is crucial that the ARCC come up with the necessary funds. This is important for the success of our future endeavors on behalf of Armenian refugees.

This year, the needs of our Home mission projects and overseas endeavors put unprecedented heavy demands on the AMAA's financial capabilities. As a result, we are now unable to respond to the above-mentioned emergency situation unless caring and compassionate people lend us, once again, a helping hand.

WILL YOU HELP?

Your gifts will help us save our stranded compatriots. Please fill in the coupon below and mail it today.

Armenian Missionary Association of America, Inc.
140 Forest Avenue
Paramus, NJ 07652

Yes, I want to help save Armenian refugees stranded in Pakistan.
Enclosed is my gift of \$_____.

Name _____

Address _____ Zip _____

City & State _____

Make checks payable to AMAA. All gifts are tax deductible.

A SPECIAL TRIP TO ARMENIA

As soon as I heard of the Armenian earthquake and saw pictures of the children in hospitals, I wanted to go there. As a clown I often go to visit children at their bedside and entertain them with balloons and magic tricks. I also encourage them to take their medicine and follow the instructions of the nurses and doctors.

As an individual I knew that I could never make the arrangements for such a trip. Then I received a call from Dicran Jamgochian, Director of the Armenian American Friendship Foundation of Washington, DC, who said, "Edwin, they need you over there. Will you go with me?" He planned to leave for Yerevan on May 21 to look for missing relatives. Since I had gone to Armenia twice before with him, I knew that I would be in good hands. This was an answer to my prayers.

After arriving in Yerevan and meeting with Mr. Kozmoyan and Mr. Shaboyan of the Committee for Cultural Relations with Armenians Abroad, I found out that many hundreds of earthquake victims from Leninakan, Artik, Kirovakan and Spitak had been brought to Yerevan. They were squeezed into every available room in four different hotels and projects. I spent three days and one evening performing at three hotels. My audiences consisted of children, mothers, senior citizens and a few male adults. I spent another day at a children's hospital and at an orphanage housing nearly 400 children who had been orphaned by the earthquake.

I will never forget the day I went to Leninakan, Spitak, Artik and Kirovakan.

School children had already been dismissed for the summer, so I started to perform in the streets and among the rows of tents and shacks. Mothers and children came from all directions. Besides the animal balloons, I gave the young children other balloons and the older ones pens.

I felt my trip to be worthwhile because I brought a little laughter, cheer and encouragement to some of these victims. In my own way I tried to tell them: we love you, care for you and will try to help you.



The smiling faces of some of our beloved children in Leninakan.

We are bound together even though we Armenians are born in another country.

I wish that I could have recorded the shouts, laughter, the Russian-style clapping, the kids chanting "Dokey" in their Armenian accent, the hugs, kisses, flowers, the handshakes from mothers,

nurses, doctors, directors and the workers in the hospitals and orphanage thanking me for coming. Now I am satisfied that I did my best to help our people in my special way.

Edwin Albertian

KEGHAM TASHJIAN APPOINTED TO HAIGAZIAN COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Dr. Kegham Tashjian of Upland, CA, a well-known educator in the field of Special Education, was recently appointed to the Board of Trustees of Haigazian College. Dr. Tashjian is the first Trustee of Haigazian College who is also a graduate of that institution.

Dr. Tashjian was born in Jordan, grew up in Turkey, attended Haigazian College in Beirut and earned a doctorate from the University of Southern California in the field of Special Education. For the past 20 years he has worked as a teacher, researcher and administrator to help physically and mentally handicapped students lead a more fulfilling life. He is currently the principal of the Francis Ortopedic School in Ontario, CA, a school for the physically handicapped.

Dr. Tashjian lives in Upland, CA, with



Dr. Kegham Tashjian

his wife and two sons. His community activities include serving as a trustee on the Upland School Board.

DR. NORAIR SARIAN HONORED



Dr. Norair Sarian

The Four Seasons Hotel was the setting to recognize the recent retirement of Norair N. Sarian, M.D., of Los Angeles, CA, a life-long supporter and a Board member of AMAA. The event was sponsored by the Administration and the Staff of the Medical Center of North Hollywood and over two hundred well-wishers were present to recognize Dr. Sarian's 29 years of service to the Center as Chief of the Radiology Department.

After the presentation of an inscribed silver tray and a gift, Medical Center President Michael Weinstein said, "Dr. Sarian will be remembered for his many contributions and professional accomplishments in serving our medical staff, patients and community."

Center Chief of Staff, Robert J. Leonard, M.D., said that in all of his years in medical practice he has never seen anyone such as Dr. Sarian, who translated his articulated Christian beliefs to his everyday professional life.

Dr. Sarian graduated from the Medical School of the American University of Beirut in 1948. After his internship and residency, he had further training and a fellowship in Radiology and Nuclear Medicine at the Graduate Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania.

He started his career at the former Cedars of Lebanon Hospital (presently Cedars-Sinai Medical Center) as Instructor in Clinical Radiology. Later he moved to the Medical Center of North Hollywood as head of the Department of Radiology and Nuclear Medicine in

1959. He was elected Chief of Staff for two terms and Chief Radiation Safety Officer until his retirement.

ARTIST LUCY JANJIGIAN'S PAINTINGS AT PRESBYTERIAN CONVENTION

Recently Lucy Janjigian of Franklin Lakes, NJ, exhibited selected paintings of her series "The Uprooted" and "The Homeless" on the occasion of the 201st General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Convention Center, Philadelphia, PA.

The General Assembly is the annual national meeting of the denomination at which ministers and lay elders meet to transact church business.

Currently works from "The Uprooted" series are at Ramapo College gallery, Mahwah, NJ, in conjunction with their program on "The Geocide" and "The Holocaust". Recently, Lucy's paintings enriched panel discussions and conferences on "The Homeless" at Montclair State College, Montclair, NJ, and Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ.

KEITH BILEZERIAN RECEIVES TRUMAN SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

Keith D. Bilezerian, son of Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Bilezerian of North Smithfield, RI, was named a 1989 Truman Scholar. Keith, a student at Ohio Wesleyan University, will receive a maximum of \$7,000 a year for up to four years of education leading to a career in public service.

Keith is a member of the Armenian Evangelical Euphrates Church of Providence, RI, where he has been an active participant in Armenian Evangelical youth activities.

VIRGINIA APELIAN

Mrs. Virginia Apelian, former Councilwoman and Council President of Clark, NJ, is also an Elder of Osceola Presbyterian Church in Clark. Being fluent in the Armenian language and well-versed in Armenian history, she is frequently called upon as a speaker on subjects related to Armenia and Armenians.

Virginia serves as reporter for "The Presbyterian," a publication of the regional churches that form the Presbytery of Elizabeth, NJ. She is also the liaison be-



Virginia Apelian

tween the Presbytery and the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA).

The Mission Committee of Virginia's church has dedicated every third Sunday in 1989 to collecting funds for the relief of Armenian earthquake survivors. The collections are channeled through the Armenia Relief Fund of the AMAA.

DR. HARRY SENECA

Harry (Senekjian) Seneca, M.D., MS in Medicine, F.A.C.P., was recently appointed as visiting Professor/Lecturer in the School of Public Health & Tropical Medicine of Tulane University Medical Center in New Orleans, LA.

Dr. Seneca is a prolific writer, having published 250 scientific and medical papers on various infections, antimicrobials, immunology, steroids, endotoxins, kidney stones, pyclophrins, etc. He is also the author of two masterful medical texts each of which is considered a Magnum Opus in the profession: The Biological Basis of Chemotherapy of Infections and Infestations (1,180 pages, Davis, Phila.) and Manual de Bacteriologia Clinica (250 pages, with Fereres, by Omnia, Spain).

He has received numerous awards for his medical and scientific works. He served in the U.S. Army Medical Corps during World War II.

Dr. Seneca is a member of the Investment Committee of AMAA and a generous contributor to the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America and other organizations.

Congratulations To Our Graduates

The Board of Directors and the office staff of the AMAA join in extending warm congratulations to the following graduates whose names were sent to us by the pastors of their respective churches. We rejoice in their accomplishments and extend to them our prayerful best wishes for continued success and fulfillment in their lives.

Adrouny, John—son of Zaven and Armine Adrouny of Hillsborough, CA; B.A. degree in Political Science from the University of Southern California;

Almoyan, Paul—son of Hagop and Zabel Almoyan of Piscataway, NJ; Bachelor of Science degree from Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA;

Arakelian, Alison Joy—daughter of John and Madeline Arakelian of Sanger, CA; Bachelor of Science degree in Consumer Science from California State University, Fresno, CA;

Ashkarian, Anoush Terry—daughter of Vahe and Chris Ashkarian of Torrance, CA; Juris Doctor degree from the University of La Verne, College of Law;

Ashkarian, Raffi David—son of Vahe and Chris Ashkarian of Torrance, CA; Bachelor of Science degree in Marketing from California State University, Fresno;

Babaian, Lisa—daughter of Archie and Joyce Babaian of Salem, NH; Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics from Fairfield University in Connecticut;

Bazirgianian, Alex—son of Nadia Bazirgianian of Havertown, PA, and the late Dr. Bazirgianian; B.A. degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Richmond, VA;

Bazirgianian, Richard—son of Nadia Bazirgianian of Havertown, PA, and the late Dr. Bazirgianian; B.A. degree in Business Administration from Villanova University;

Bentley, Cynthia—daughter of Mrs. Susan Bentley of West Chester, PA, and Christopher Bentley; Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics from Bucknell University;

Boloyan, Carl V.—son of Vartan and Araxie Boloyan of Cranston, RI; graduated from Worcester Polytechnic In-

stitute in Worcester, MA;

Changelian, Eric—son of Charles and Beatrice Changelian of Arlington, MA; Bachelor of Science degree in Finance from Bentley College;

Chaparian, Abe—son of Rev. Apraham and Mrs. Mary Chaparian of Pasadena, CA; Master of Science degree in Counseling from California State University, Los Angeles;

Chaparian, Lucy—daughter of Rev. Apraham and Mrs. Mary Chaparian of Pasadena, CA; Bachelor of Arts degree in Child Development and Psychology from California State University, Northridge;

Console-Ossun, Darlene Marie—wife of Tim Ossun and daughter of Russ and Anita Console of Fresno, CA; Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Administration from California State University, Fresno;

Dayian, Daryl—son of Mrs. Anne Dayian of E. Greenwich, RI, and the late Dr. Edward Dayian; will pursue his career as a lawyer, having graduated from the University of Rhode Island;

Doghranji, James—son of Dr. Peter and Mrs. Mary Doghranji of Haver-town, PA; M.D. degree from Thomas Jefferson University;

Fermanian, Annette—daughter of Krikor and Violet Fermanian of Manhattan Beach, CA; Bachelor's degree in Public Administration from U.S.C.;

Garabedian, Jennifer—daughter of John and Helen Garabedian of Belmont, MA; Master's Degree in Piano Performance from the New England Conservatory of Music;

Garo, Kim—daughter of Philip and Elaine Garo of Fresno, CA; Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from California State University, Fresno, CA;

Gazarian, Rena—daughter of Dr. Arnold and Mrs. Dianne Gazarian of Fresno, CA; graduated Magna Cum Laude with a double major in Finance and Marketing and a double minor in Armenian studies and Agribusiness from California State University, Fresno, CA;

Hanlon, Billi—wife of Robert L. Foster and daughter of Queenie B. Hanlon, formerly of Providence, RI, and

now living in California, and the late William F. Hanlon; Master of Arts degree in Psychology from California State University, Sacramento;

Hanoian, Lesley—daughter of Setrag and Beverly Hanoian of Watertown, MA; Bachelor of Science degree in Economics from Wheaton College;

Haroutunian, Greg—son of Vahack and Elizabeth Haroutunian of Fresno, CA; graduated Cum Laude with a Master of Divinity degree from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School;

Janigian, Aris—son of Andy and Virginia Janigian of Fresno, CA; Doctor of Philosophy degree from Claremont College;

Kadehjian, Lisa—daughter of Papken and Shake Kadehjian of Long Island City, NY, B.A. degree in Psychology from New York University;

Kalemkarian, David C.—husband of Shawn Kalemkarian of El Cerrito, CA, and son of Stephen and Peggy Kalemkarian of Fresno, CA; Degree of Juris Doctor from the University of California, Berkeley;

Karapogosyan, Mesrop—son of Akop and Sirun Karapogosyan of Los Angeles, CA; Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from California State University, Los Angeles;

Kassarjian, Raffi—son of Hovel and Miralda Kassarjian of San Rafael, CA; B.A. degree in International Relations from Stanford University;

Kebadjian, Michael—son of Claude and Seta Kebadjian of Watertown, MA; Bachelor of Science degree in Political Science from Boston College;

Keledjian, Lynette Gayle—daughter of George and Pat Keledjian of Fresno, CA; Liberal Studies degree from California State University, Fresno, CA;

Maljanian, Daniel E.—grandson of Erma Sweet of Fresno, CA; combined J.D. and M.B.A. degree from the University of California, Berkeley;

McNeill, Allison K.—daughter of Alex and Pauline (Yesayan) McNeill and granddaughter of the late Dr. H.G. Yesayan; B.A. degree in English from the University of Michigan;

Mokkosian, The Rev. John—husband of Linda Mokkosian of Salem,

NH; Doctorate of Ministry degree in Marriage and Family Counseling from Andover Newton Theological Seminary;

Moore, Lorna—of Fresno, CA, daughter of Thomas and Barbara Moore; Bachelor of Science degree in Business Management from California State University, Fresno;

Nahabedian, Steven—son of

William and Carolyn Nahabedian of Floral Park, Long Island, NY; B.B.A. degree in Accounting from Adelphi University;

Nazarian, Beverly—daughter of Mary Martha Nazarian of Arlington, MA; Bachelor of Science degree in Biological Sciences from Carleton College;

Nersesian, Michael Lucas—son

of Lucas and Barbara Nersesian of Reedley, CA, B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from the University of California, Berkeley;

Palermo, Patricia—daughter of Joseph and Marie Palermo of Fresno, CA; Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from California

(cont. on next page)

ANNOUNCING THE 70TH ANNUAL MEETING of the ARMENIAN MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, INC.

The Seventieth Annual Meeting of the Armenian Missionary Association of America, Inc. (AMAA), will be held on Sunday, October 15, 1989, at 1:30 p.m. at the First Armenian Presbyterian Church, 430 S. First Street, Fresno, CA.

All members of the AMAA are invited to attend the meeting to:

- I. Consider and approve the reports of the Officers, Executives, Committees, Chapters and Affiliated Boards of the Association for fiscal 1988-89;
- II. Consider and approve the financial reports for fiscal 1988-89;
- III. Elect eight Board members to replace those whose terms have expired;
- IV. Consider and approve amendments to the Bylaws of the Association, as recommended by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee and previously approved by the Board of Directors;
- V. Elect four members to the Nominating Committee;
- VI. Elect an Auditor;
- VII. Consider and approve the Association's budget for fiscal 1989-90; and
- VIII. Consider and act upon any other business that may legitimately come before the membership.

PROGRAM OF THE 70TH ANNUAL MEETING: RELATED ACTIVITIES

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10

- Meeting of the Board of Directors of AEUNA: 6:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11

- Meeting of the Board of Directors of AEUNA: 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12

- Retreat/Seminar: 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. (For all AMAA Board members, active pastors of AEUNA and representatives of AMAA Chapters/Church Mission Committees).

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13

- Retreat/Seminar: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
- Meeting of the Board of Directors of AMAA: 7:30 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14

- Meeting of the Board of Directors of the AMAA: 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
- Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Stephen Philibosian Foundation: 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.
- The 70th Annual Meeting Banquet (honoring Mr. & Mrs. Henry Gertmenian): 6:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15

- Annual Meeting Service of Praise: 11:00 a.m.
- Luncheon: 12:30 p.m.
- The 70th Annual Meeting of the AMAA: 1:30 p.m.
- Meeting of the Board of Directors of the AMAA: 4:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

The AMAA President, Dr. H. Philip Hovnanian, and the Board of Directors look forward with great anticipation to the presence, participation and input of all ministers and members of churches, representatives of AMAA Chapters/Church Mission Committees, as well as members and friends of the Association.

OBITUARIES

HILDA NUYUJUKIAN



Hilda Nuyujukian was born on June 5, 1931, in Aleppo, Syria, to Samuel and Yeranouhi Cholakian. Hilda was their first child. Her parents, survivors of the genocide, were active church members of the Evangelical Armenian Church and proud descendants of Aram Bay Cholakian, leader of the Zeitun resistance. Hilda's grandmother, Tervanda Keshishian from Marash, was a pillar of the local Evangelical community. Vartivar Cholakian, her grandfather, was a preacher and church organist.

Her upbringing involved schooling at the Bethel Armenian Evangelical School and American High School for Girls in Aleppo. Upon graduation, she began seven years of service as director of the Bethel School kindergarten. She had always been involved in Christian endeavor, drama, and was very active in directing and performing music.

On June 5, 1959, she wed Soghomon Nuyujukian, a minister in Aleppo. After one year, a son, Ara, was born to her in Alexandria, Egypt. In 1962, she moved to Beirut, and two years later had a daughter, Christine. Her twelve years in Lebanon were spent as a mother, kindergarten superintendent, and active supporter of her husband.

In 1974, the family moved to Salem, NH, to fill the parsonage of the Salem Armenian Church. During this period, she again assisted her husband in his work and visitation of the sick.

In 1980, the family moved to Drexel Hill, where she became an active member in the Armenian Martyrs Church. In 1984, she followed her daughter to work at Rosenbluth Travel in Wilmington, Delaware, and took a promotion to be the international coordinator of their corporate office in Center City.

Hilda was a wonderful mother, a good wife, and a gracious hostess. Everywhere she went,

she radiated her love for life and care for others, which was cherished and admired by everyone she met. Her smile and her laugh will always be remembered.

The Lord has given, the Lord has taken, blessed be the name of the Lord.

Editor's Note: On behalf of the Nuyujukian and Cholakian families, The Rev. Dr. Soghomon Nuyujukian would like to extend his heartfelt gratitude to all those who showed their affection and respect for Hilda Nuyujukian through their cards, letters and telephone messages of sympathy and understanding or with in lieu of flowers, gifts given to the AMAA in her loving memory.

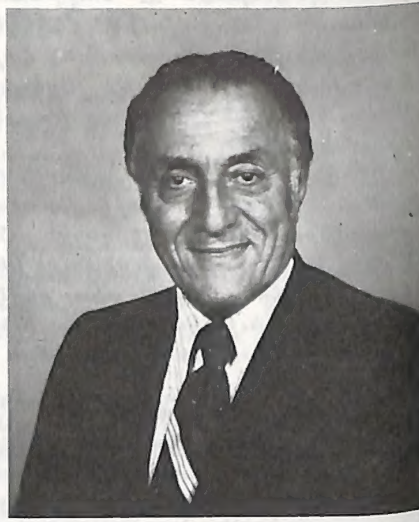
THE REV. GEORGE DIRAN MINASSIAN

The Rev. George Diran Minassian was born on July 15, 1905, in The Bronx, New York. He was baptized in the Armenian Evangelical Church of New York. In 1911 his family moved to Ridgefield Park, New Jersey, where Diran was a member of Boy Scout Troop No. 1, the first troop in the United States. In 1921 the family moved to Reedley, California to live on a ranch. It was here that Diran served as teenage president of the Armenian Christian Endeavor Union, then composed of societies only in the Fresno area, including Fowler, Kingsburg, Parlier and Reedley. After losing the ranching battle to the recession of 1922, part of the family moved back to New York.

With Mother Phoebe and Sister Armina still in California, Diran was sent to live with his Aunt Eunice in The Bronx. Though a total stranger, Diran heeded his aunt's urgings and attended the Washington Birthday Dinner in 1923 of the Young People's Christian Association at the Armenian Evangelical Church. He discovered that all the young people spoke Armenian, in which he was sadly deficient. Diran decided there and then to learn the Armenian language, which he later mastered.

In June, 1925, Diran was elected President of the Young People's Christian Association. With his California Union experience, Diran arranged a joint meeting with the Philadelphia society in October and then a meeting of all societies, including now West New York and Troy, in New York on November 22, 1925. Thus was born the Interstate Union of the Armenian Young People's Christian Association, with Diran as its first President. In succeeding years, this office was the training ground of many church leaders. In later years, Diran himself became the first American-born Trustee and first American-born Elder in the Armenian Evangelical Church of New York.

On November 30, 1933, Diran was married to Lydia, daughter of Badveli Apraham and Shoushan Hartunian. The family was



blessed with two children, Donald and Roger. Diran's vocation was in the rug and carpet renovating business, a heavy and hard way to make a living. His first love, of course, was church work, and it seemed he was at church eight nights a week. In 1949 Diran opened a large rug store on the ground floor of his own five story building. But his first calling was stronger—he wanted the Armenian Evangelical Church to be even more vital in holding the loyalty of its youth in the post-WWII era. So he gave up the newly-opened store and enrolled at New York Theological Seminary, and later Union Theological Seminary, to study for the professional ministry. He spent the first 2½ of 5 years of study as a dormitory student, away from wife and children. During this time he served as the unordained Assistant Pastor of Rutgers Presbyterian Church. On October 25, 1953, due to his outstanding academic record in theological education and exemplary church service, he became the last person ordained by the Presbytery of New York City without an undergraduate education. Shortly thereafter, Diran was invited by the Armenian Evangelical Union—Eastern States to become its first paid Youth Worker.

In 1956, at the conclusion of the two year term, the family moved to Fresno, California, where Diran assisted with youth work at the Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church. It was in Fresno where Diran first entered the real estate business. With both sons now in college, Diran and Lydia moved to Santa Barbara in 1958, where Diran had a very successful real estate career. In fact, he received First Place so many times as the top salesman in the Santa Barbara Board of Realtors, that the Board established a second "First Place" award as an incentive to others. It was in Santa Barbara, among the non-Armenian communi-

ty, that Diran now became known by his first name. But even here his love for the Armenian Evangelical Church was evident. From 1960 to 1962, he and Lydia traveled each week to North Hollywood to lead worship, attend meetings, and meet the pastoral needs of the First Armenian Congregational Church of San Fernando Valley. The Minassians also organized gatherings of the Armenian community in Santa Barbara.

In October, 1976, George retired for the first time, so he and Lydia could move to San Diego to be near son Roger and family. Responding again to his first love, he organized the Armenian Evangelical Fellowship of San Diego, which met quarterly in the church pastored by Roger. During this time he also took a 40-day mission trip to the Middle East to encourage our churches and youth work there. And when the New York church was without a pastor, he served as interim pastor for two months at his own expense to assist his home church.

In the fall of 1980, the Minassians returned to Santa Barbara, where George reentered the real estate business. Following his stroke in 1983, George and Lydia moved to Fresno to be near son Roger, who was now pastoring Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church. Throughout all these years he and Lydia also enjoyed regular visits with the family of son Donald, a Professor of Mathematics at Butler University in Indianapolis, Indiana. In May of 1989 George suffered a second stroke which further incapacitated him. A third and final stroke took him home on Monday, July 3, 1989, to the Lord he so faithfully and so tirelessly served.

Today George Diran is survived by his wife, Lydia; two sons, Donald and Roger; a sister, Armina Iskiyan of Tucson; and four grandchildren, David, Laura, Paul, and Valerie.

JOHN MANOOG HALAJIAN

John Manoog Halajian was born in the region of Kharpert, the village of Nor Kegg, in Western Armenia (now Turkey), on July 8, 1891. Very early on he became acquainted with the fear that Armenians shared towards their Turkish rulers. His father, Manoog, had him take his younger brother's birth year as his own, so that he would not be conscripted into the Turkish army, thus enabling him to leave Turkey with his uncles for America. However, after arriving in Chicago, he received the news that his family had been massacred during the Genocide—mother, father and seven siblings, all dead. Life lost its meaning for him, so he resolved to join the U.S. Army, to fight against the powers which destroyed his family. He received an honorable discharge in 1919.



In 1926, he married Agnes Terzian in her parents' home in Fresno. The newlyweds moved to San Francisco and began seeking work. God was with them every step of the way, and John and Agnes in turn founded their lives firmly on Him, both trusting Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord. John was able to find work as an auto mechanic, learning the trade and working hard for twelve years, until he was able to buy the business from his boss. Both John and Agnes gave their all, and after years bought the building also, and John retired in 1944 at age 53. Through all this they worked together, in sincere love for each other, and with sincere gratitude towards God for granting them success.

As a couple, they were exemplary in their love and sacrifice for each other. Only a few weeks before his death, John was commenting on the difficulties, disagreements and divorce so prevalent in families today. He said, "Where there is love, you can work problems out. We never said, 'This is your job, this is mine.' We did everything together." They were a loving, happy couple, married for over 63 years.

For almost as long as they were married, they were members of the Calvary Armenian Congregational Church of San Francisco, CA. Although John was from an Apostolic family and Agnes from an Evangelical, they both considered their faith as their most important possession, no matter what the denomination, and served unflinchingly.

No less important to John was his Armenian people. He was a member of the Knights of Vartan and the Armenian General Benevolent Union. Both John and Agnes have also been active supporters of the ministry of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA).

John's faith was real and very much alive.

The scriptures were important in his personal belief, and often he would sing, *Der Voghormya* (Lord, have mercy), including verses that he had written himself. The Lord, in his mercy, blessed John with a long life, and welcomed him into eternity on June 8, 1989, one month short of his 98th birthday.

Having no children of their own, they adopted everyone. There are many friends and neighbors, both Armenian and non-Armenian, who will surely miss John for many, many years to come.

The AMAA Board of Directors extend their heartfelt condolences to the families of the deceased through the medium of the AMAA NEWS.

*Gagos, Henry	Torrance, CA	March 3, 1989
Manis, Edward	Southfield, MI	March 5, 1989
Kilbashian, Esther	Watertown, MA	May 11, 1989
Moradian, Pete	Fresno, CA	May 16, 1989
*Chopoorian, Andrew	Lincoln, RI	May 21, 1989
Ishkanian, Walter	Fresno, CA	May 23, 1989
*DuPont, Victoria	Costa Mesa, CA	May 23, 1989
Mardirossian, Armenak	Emerson, NJ	May 25, 1989
*Zambakian, Herbert I.	Glen Ridge, NJ	May 30, 1989
*Balukjian, Esther	Havertown, PA	June 4, 1989
Halajian, John	San Francisco, CA	June 8, 1989
*Philipian, Lucy	S. Lyon, MI	June 14, 1989
*Harikian, Diran	Los Angeles, CA	June 19, 1989
*Kutchukian, Elise	Loudonville, NY	June 24, 1989
Ajootian, Violet	N. Providence, RI	July 2, 1989
*Minassian, G. Diran	Fresno, CA	July 3, 1989
Avedisian, Regina	Crestwood, NY	July 7, 1989
*Keuhnelian, Marie	Cliffside Park, NJ	July 11, 1989
Demerjian, Armine	Scarsdale, NY	July 11, 1989
Nahabedian, Jamileh	Glen Rock, NJ	July 12, 1989
*Cordonat, Joseph	San Francisco, CA	

*Memorials were designated for AMAA.

BIBLES FOR ARMENIA

The following are excerpts from letters and statements written by church leaders and Christian workers in Armenia.

"The physical need of the survivors of the catastrophic earthquake is great and critical, but their need for spiritual relief and comfort is greater and more critical."

"One way of providing for the spiritual relief of our people is to make the Word of God available to them. . . There is a new and unprecedented interest in the Christian faith and in the spoken, as well as the written Word of God. People find comfort, consolation and peace in the gospel of Jesus Christ. There are virtually thousands of people who are eager to have their own Bible."

"The need of our nation at the present time, besides lodging, food and clothing, is the Living Word of God—the Bible. . ."

"In most cases, when believers took clothing and financial help to the hospitals, the patients said, 'Please, more than clothing and financial help, we need the Word of God. Bring us Bibles.'"

"Once again, I thank God for the AMAA and for its 'Bibles for Armenia' project through which the Word of God, the 'Good News', is provided to our nation."

In light of the foregoing, the AMAA, along with its material assistance to the victims of the earthquake of last December, is making every effort to deliver as many Bibles as possible to Armenia for distribution to our people. After successfully delivering a shipment of 5,000 Bibles in May, the AMAA is now working in cooperation with the Armenian Evangelical Union of France on a larger shipment of 20,000 Bibles. This is an historical opportunity to make the comforting and reviving Word of God available to our people in our "Myre Hairenik."

WILL YOU HELP?

Your gifts will help to meet the challenge of sending more Bibles for Armenia. Please fill in the coupon below and mail it today.

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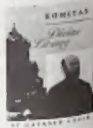
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